

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice

808 Pacific Commerce Bldg.
Los Angeles, Calif.
September 25, 1937

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

RE: JAMES FROME
CECIL B. DE MILLE - Victim
EXTORTION
L.A. File #9-217

Dear Sir:

On September 24, 1937 there were turned over to the Los Angeles Division two letters which had been addressed to Mr. Cecil B. De Mille, both dated September 14, 1937 and signed by one JAMES FROME, General Delivery, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

According to Miss Florence Cole, secretary to Mr. Cecil B. De Mille, Producer and President of the Cecil B. De Mille Productions, Inc., these letters had been received by Miss Gladys Rosson, personal secretary to Mr. De Mille at his home, 2010 De Mille Drive, Hollywood, California, and were referred to Miss Cole for the attention of Mr. De Mille. Miss Cole explained that all mail addressed to Mr. De Mille merely mentioning the address as Hollywood, California, as occurred in this instance, is usually delivered by the Hollywood Post Office to the home of Mr. De Mille rather than forwarded directly to the Paramount Studio where the De Mille Productions are made.

Miss Cole stated that in view of the large amount of correspondence received by Mr. De Mille, Miss Rosson, after opening the envelopes and taking out the letters, had immediately destroyed the envelopes, for which reason they were not available for turning over to the Bureau. It is noted in this respect that the personal secretary, at the time the letters are opened, does not read the contents but merely notes as to whether the name and address of the correspondent appears thereon, in which event the envelopes are destroyed.

RECORDED & INDEXED

99-3091-1

According to Miss Cole, the letters were received at the home of Mr. De Mille on either the 20th or 21st of September, Miss Rosson being unable to definitely state which date in view of the fact that the correspondence received by her is so voluminous.

J. Edgar Hoover

LAB. FILED
SEP 27 1937
FBI - LOS ANGELES

Director, F.B.I.
Page 2.

September 25, 1937

Miss Cole advised, however, that after the contents had been read and furnished to Mr. De Mille, the letters were called to the attention of Miss Rosson who advised that she remembers receiving and opening the letters and definitely recalls having seen the sentences appearing therein to the effect that the writer desired a loan from Mr. De Mille. The letters to Messrs. De Mille, which are written on plain tablet paper with blue lines and dated at Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 14, 1937, the contents of which letters are being set forth hereinafter, were apparently enclosed in envelopes addressed to Mr. Cecil B. De Mille, Hollywood, Calif.

Albuquerque

N. M.

Sept. 14, 1937

"Mr. Cecil B. De Mille
Hollywood, Calif.

Please excuse me Mr. De Mille. I don't mean to do this. I'm a great admirer of yours on the Radio programs. But I need \$300.00 and have got to have it right away. I am asking this as a loan but if not a loan I'm going to get it other wise. So don't fail me or there might be something serious might happen to either you or your wife Dolores Costello.

"This is the first and last and only warning you get. I'm not threatening you by I mean business and don't fail me so put a check for \$300.00 in the mail to be del. to me at Santa Fe N. M. and don't say anything about it to the police. Because I don't want any publicity about it."

JAMES EARL
Gen. Del.
Santa Fe N.M.

Director, F.B.I.
Page 3.

September 26, 1937

"Albuquerque N.M.
Sept. 14th 1937

"Mr. De Mille

"I dont know if I spell your name right or not, excuse me if I dont but perhaps you have got my other letter by now. If you havent you'll get it pretty soon. I mean just what I say in the letter. If you dont come across I'll come out and see what I can do.

"I mean business and no fooling."

JAMES FROME
St. Fe N.M.

The original of the above letters, which have been placed in cellophane envelopes, are being forwarded in an appropriate mailing tube, Air Mail, to the Bureau with the request that the technical laboratory make an appropriate study of the type of paper used and appropriately process same for any latent fingerprints that may appear thereon. In this respect it might be noted that instant letter is known to have been handled by the following individuals:

Miss Gladys Rosson, personal secretary to Cecil E. De Mille.
Miss Florence Cole, secretary to Cecil E. De Mille, at Paramount Studio.
Miss Dorothy Griwitz, secretary to Mr. Pine, assistant to Cecil E. De Mille.
Mr. Cecil E. De Mille.
Mr. Harry Cottrell, head of the Still Department, Paramount Studio.
Arthur Walker, personal valet to Cecil E. De Mille.
Inspector C. D. Lowe, Post Office Department.

Director, F.B.I.
Page 4.

September 25, 1937

The fingerprint impressions of Miss Grivatz, Miss Cole and Mr. Cottrell are being forwarded herewith for elimination purposes, it being noted that the fingerprint impressions of Inspector Lowe are presently on file in the Personal Identification section of the Identification Division of the Bureau. An effort will be made within the next few days to obtain the fingerprint impressions of the remaining individuals known to have handled this letter for transmission to the Bureau so that same may be used for elimination purposes.

The substance of the above information with reference to these extortion letters was immediately furnished by teletype to the Bureau and the El Paso office with the request that the El Paso office conduct appropriate investigation at Santa Fe, New Mexico, with a view of apprehending the writer of these letters. For the assistance of the El Paso Division, a photostatic copy of these letters, which was taken in the Los Angeles office, is being forwarded herewith, it being noted that the original letters were written in pencil.

It is requested that the technical laboratory, upon completion of their examination of these letters, advise the El Paso and Los Angeles offices of the results thereof and likewise furnish to each of these offices, photographic copies of the original extortion letters.

Very truly yours,

J. H. Hanson
J. H. HANSON,
Special Agent in Charge.

EFE:MO
cc: El Paso

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

19235

Laboratory Report

Case: James Frome;
Cecil R. DeWille - Victim;
Extortion.

Number: 9-3091-
~~100-100000~~

Specimens: Requested that the signatures of John Stewart appearing in
jacket #12786 be compared with the questioned material in
instant case.

Examination requested by: Mr. Coffey (Los Angeles office of origin)

Date received: 10-7-37 ft 11 am

Examination requested: Document

Result of examination

Examination by: Appel

Inconclusive

J. H. [Signature]

78 James F. ...
94 James F. ...
I

44786

1922

James F. ...
John ...

14

9-30

Q1 Letterhead, printed on such
with blue green lines spaced off
beginning 2" from the top on the front side
are 19 lines on front + 22 on back. There
is no watermark. The sheet measures
7.90 x 4.98 x .0034 + weight 74.1750

Q2 Same as Q1. Measures 7.90 x 4.98 x .0034
weight 74.1744. Size 18"

Q3 Same as Q1. Measures 7.90 x 4.98 x .0034
weight 74.1744. Size 18"

Q4 Same as Q1. Measures 7.90 x 4.98 x .0034
weight 74.1754. Size 18"

To date pr. on Q1

Silva " " Q3

W:EEB

October 12, 1937

9-3091 -1

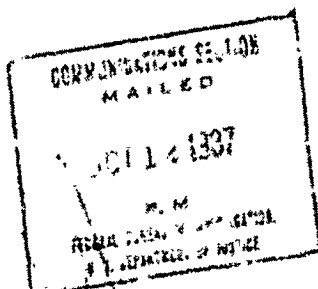
Special Agent in Charge.
Los Angeles, California.

Re: James Brown;
Cecil B. DeMille - Victim;
Extortion.

Dear Sir:

With reference to Laboratory Report # 15134, in connection with the above entitled case, there are transmitted herewith photographic copies of the following specimens which your office submitted for examination:

9-3091-1: Q1 through Q4



cc-11 Pass

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

Enclosure #

T. ...
 ...
 ...

W. Paul L. Deming
Lafayette

I have been thinking
of you very much lately.
I hope you are well.
I am well at present.
I have been thinking
of you very much lately.

19134
535

12-2-2012

Case: James Frome;
Cecil B. De Mille - Victim
Briarcliff

Number: **9-3051-1**

Specimens: 9-3091-1 Q1 Letter beginning "Please excuse Me..."
 " Q2 Second page of above letter beginning "other wise... So..."
 " Q3 Letter beginning "I dont know..."
 " Q4 Second page of above letter beginning "about it to..."

**Berkeley Community
Fluorine A. Sale**

Examination requested by: **Harry Gethrell**
Los Angeles

Date received: **Aug 9-24-37 Rec 10-1-37 4 11 am (chp Sep. 29, 1937.)**

Examination requested: Document Fingerprint

Examination by:

1992

AIR MAIL

Furnish Los Angeles and El Paso photographs of above evidence.

To C. S. Fox - into phone

1. *Leptospira interrogans* type 100

f a given type in \mathcal{A}

Latent by direct narrative - Appl. note.

Fragment compared with climp prints, inc. & S. Low
ident

Name search conducted - 1 John From John

Stewart^{Thurs}) #SI 42786 located - not identical with
Latent

10/17/37
ATTN. 15M

October 7, 1937.

9-3097-1

Mr. J. H. Hanson,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
903 Pacific Commerce Building,
Los Angeles, California.

RE: JAMES FROME; Cecil D.
De Wille - Victim;
RATCHILL ST.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your letter of September 25, 1937, transmitting two extortion letters beginning "Please excuse Me..." and "I don't know...", respectively, together with the fingerprints of Dorothy Grimes, Florence A. Gale and Harry Cottrell, for elimination purposes, in connection with the above-entitled case.

You are advised that the letters submitted have been examined, and one latent fingerprint, of value for comparison purposes, was developed on the first page of the letter beginning "Please excuse Me...". This impression was compared with the fingerprints submitted for elimination purposes and with those of C. D. Lave, previously submitted for purposes of elimination by your office, without effecting an identification.

In an effort to identify the latent print developed, a search was conducted through the alphabetical name file of the Bureau's Identification Division upon the basis of the name "James Frome." Although no record was disclosed for that name, the fingerprints of one John Stewart, alias John Frome, FBI-42746, were located and compared with the latent impression with negative results. For your information and possible assistance there is enclosed a transcript of the prior criminal record of Stewart. A copy of this transcript is also being forwarded to the El Paso Field Office.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

Enclosure,
1 - El Paso
All other copies
to be destroyed
by Special Delivery.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DECODE

EL PASO, TEX.
September 24, 1937

Transmit the following Teletype message to:

SAC, LOS ANGELES

PHONE. JAMES PROME, CECIL D. DE WILLE, VICTIM, KIDNAPING. IMPOSSIBLE
TO HAVE AGENT AT SANTA FE BEFORE TOMORROW NIGHT. SUGGEST THAT TELEGRAM
BE FORWARDED TO SUBJECT CARE GENERAL DELIVERY, SANTA FE, N.M. CONTAINING
NOTES TO EFFECT THAT AIRMAIL LETTER COMPLYING WITH DEMANDS WILL BE FORWARDED
TO HIS SAME ADDRESS TO ARRIVE MONDAY MORNING SEPTEMBER TWENTY SEVENTH
ADVISE

GOLVIN

WCF:jn

9-

cc - Bureau

9-3071

17

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 9-25 p. M. Per Jca

[illegible]

DECODED COPY

DIRECTOR AND SAC EL PASO

~~HAS RECEIVED TWO LETTERS FROM SUBJECT DATED AT SANTA FE NEW MEXICO~~

SEPTEMBER FOURTEEN NINETEEN THIRTY SEVEN, DEMANDING THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND THREATENING BODILY HARM TO SUBJECT OR FAMILY UPON FAILURE TO COMPLY. SUBJECT DEMANDS MONEY BE FORWARDED TO HIM CARE GENERAL

~~DE VERY SANTA FE IMMEDIATELY. EL PASO WILL CONDUCT IMMEDIATE~~

INVESTIGATION AT SANTA FE AND PRESENT TO USA THAT DISTRICT. ENVELOPES
CONTAINING ABOVE LETTERS WERE DESTROYED BY RECIPIENT. INVESTIGATION
BEING CONDUCTED IN EFFORT TO OBTAIN WITNESSES WHO CAN TESTIFY RELATIVE
TRANSMISSION BY MAIL

'END

OK FBI WASHINGTON DC WCC

RECORDED
HANSON

9-3091-2
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
SEP. 28. 1937
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

PAGE TWO

THE SUBJECT THEN TOLD THE POSTMASTER ALL ABOUT THE MATTER AND ASKED
TO BE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY AND TURNED INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

THE POSTMASTER CALLED THE CHIEF OF POLICE AT SANTA FE, WHO LOCKED MERRITT IN JAIL. THE CHIEF OF POLICE THEN NOTIFIED AGENT E C DORRIS WHO WAS WORKING ON THE CASE AT THE TIME. AGENT DORRIS NOW QUESTIONING MERRITT AND WILL MAKE FURTHER REPORT

COLVIN

END

ACEK

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LA CK 1E1 LOS ANGELES EL

44

[Faint, illegible handwritten or stamped text]

TELETYPE

COPY

FBI DEPT OF JUSTICE EL PASO

SEPT 23 1937

1 10P JFI

DIRECTOR

SAC LOS ANGELES

PHONE. RAMON MERRITT ALIAS JAMES FROME CECIL B DEMILLE, VIKEX. SUBJECT
CONFIDED TO AN ASSOCIATED PRESS REPORTER THIS AFTERNOON THAT HIS TRUE
NAME IS RAMON MERRITT, THAT HE IS A WORLD WAR VETERAN, THIRTY NINE YEARS
OF AGE, SALESMAN FOR TOMS PEANUT COMPANY, RESIDES AT FOUR NAUGHT THREE
SOUTH MAIN ST., ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO WITH HIS WIFE AND FOUR CHILDREN.
THAT HE WAS DESPERATE FOR MONEY AND ROARING DRUNK WHEN HE WROTE THE
LETTER. HE FURTHER TOLD THE REPORTER THAT HE KNEW THE GOVERNMENT HAD HIS
FINGERPRINTS ON FILE AT THE WAR DEPARTMENT AND THAT HE WOULD BE CAUGHT.
HE FURTHER TOLD THE REPORTER THAT HE WAS EXPECTING A LETTER FROM THE
VICTIM WITH THE MONEY IN IT AND THAT IF HE CALLED FOR IT AT THE POST
OFFICE HE WOULD BE ARRESTED. HE ASKED THE REPORTER TO GO WITH HIM TO
GET THE LETTER AND THEN FOR THE REPORTER TO TURN HIM OVER TO THE LAW
OFFICIALS, THEY APPARENTLY WENT TO THE POST OFFICE AT SANTA FE, NEW
MEXICO TOGETHER, GOT THE BEGGY LETTER AND OPENED IT.

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

9-3091-3	
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	
SEP 30 1937 P.M.	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
FILE	

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

19134

Laboratory Report

Case: James Frome;
Cecil B. De Mille - Victim
Extortion

Number 9-3091-1

Specimens: 9-3091-1 Q1 Letter beginning "Please excuse Me..."
" Q2 Second page of above letter beginning "other wise. So..."
" Q3 Letter beginning "I dont know..."
" Q4 Second page of above letter beginning "about it to..."

Fingerprints of the following for elimination:

Dorothy Grimsby
Florence A. Cole
Harry Cottrell

Examination requested by: Los Angeles

Date received. Blk 9-27-37 Rec 10-1-37 ft 11 am

Examination requested: Document-Fingerprint

Result of examination:

Examination by. APOTT

cc-El Paso

AIR MAIL

Furnish Los Angeles and El Paso photographs of above evidence.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Laboratory Report

Case: James Frome;
Leoil D. DeMille - Victim;
Extortion.

October 5, 1937

Number: 9-3091-1

Specimens:

1. Letter beginning "Please excuse me—".
2. Second page of above letter beginning "other witness. So—".
3. Letter beginning "I don't know—".
4. Second page of above letter beginning "about it to—".

Fingerprints of the following for elimination:

Dorothy Grinn

Florence A. Cole

Harry Cottrell

Examination requested by: Los Angeles

Date received: 9-27-37

Examination requested: Document - Fingerprint

Result of examination:

Examination by: Appel

The two extortion letters were written in pencil on white paper with blue-green lines spaced approximately three to the inch. There are nineteen lines on the front side beginning approximately 1 3/10 inches from the top and twenty-two lines on the reverse side. There is no watermark. The sheets measure approximately 8 1/2 inches and have a substance number of 18.

A report on the fingerprint examination will be submitted separately.

Photographic copies of the evidence submitted will be forwarded the Los Angeles and El Paso field divisions within the next several days.

THE ORIGINAL EVIDENCE IS BEING RETAINED IN THE LABORATORY FOR USE IN ANY SUBSEQUENT EXAMINATIONS WHICH MAY BE DESIRED. SHOULD YOUR OFFICE DESIRE THIS ORIGINAL EVIDENCE FOR USE IN ANY SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS WHICH MAY DEVELOP THE BUREAU SHOULD BE NOTIFIED IN AMPLE TIME TO PERMIT TRANSMITTAL.

1-Bureau
2-Los Angeles
1-El Paso
1-Laboratory

9-3091-4	
SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 11 1937	
FBI - LOS ANGELES	

October 5, 1937

9-3091 - 4

Mr. J. H. Hassen,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
903 Pacific Commerce Building,
Los Angeles, California.

Re: James Frome;
Cecil B. DeMille - Victim;
Extortion.

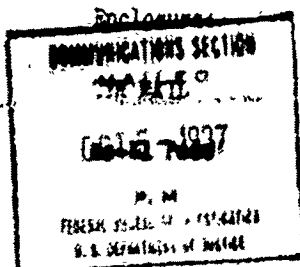
Dear Sir:

There is transmitted herewith the laboratory report covering the examination of specimens submitted by your office in connection with the above entitled matter and received in the Bureau September 27, 1937.

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.



19291

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Laboratory Report

Case: Roman Merritt alias James Frome;
Cecil B. De Mille, Victim.
Extortion

Number: 9-3091-5

Specimens: 9-3091-5 K1 Sample handwriting of Roman Merritt consisting of
four page statement dated Sept. 28, 1937.

Examination requested by: El Paso

Date received: Rik 10-4-37 Rec 10-11-37 10 am ft

Examination requested: Document

Result of examination:

Examination by: APPEL #1

cc-Los Angeles

10/12
[Handwritten signature]

rec.
10/16/37
CSE

10/16/37

10/14
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

19281

Laboratory Report

Case: Roman Merritt alias James Francis;
Cecil B. De Mille, Victim.
Extortion

Number: 9-3091-5

Specimens: 9-3091-5 K1 Sample handwriting of Roman Merritt consisting of
four page statement dated Sept. 28, 1937.

Examination requested by: K1 Pass

Date received: ELK 10-8-37 Rec 10-11-37 10 am 30

Examination requested: Document

Result of examination:

cc-Los Angeles

Concluded that K1 wrote
Q1 thru Q4.
Examination by: MAJOR JF

Q-1 thru Q 4.

K-1

I had
Wipe
at sea

I know
would
not special

is
asking
me
you
be

is
know
me
be

202 U. S. Courthouse
El Paso, Texas
October 5, 1937.

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sirs:

There is forwarded herewith signed statement of subject Merritt, in his own handwriting, for comparison of the handwriting therein with that appearing in the original extortion notes in this case.

The Los Angeles Division is being furnished a copy of this letter, and is requested to forward to the Bureau the original extortion notes referred to above.

Although the subject admits in his signed statement that he wrote and mailed these extortion letters, it is felt this comparison should be made in view of the possibility that at a subsequent date subject might refute his original statement.

Very truly yours,

Richardson

R. H. COLVIN
Special Agent in Charge.

ECB:mn
Encl.
cc-Los Angeles

REASON: 12.

152

9-3091-5

June 1957 4.

144

The facts developed by this investigation were given by telephone to Special Agent in Charge Colvin at Albuquerque, N. M., who discussed same with United States Attorney Everett M. Grantham, who authorized the filing of a complaint. Such complaint was filed before U. S. Commissioner Sa, Dazco by Special Agent in Charge R. H. Colvin charging violation of Section 338-A, Title 18, U. S. C. A. As United States Attorney Grantham advised that Agent's presence would not be necessary at the hearing, the results of same have not yet been determined. Newspapers reflect that subject entered a plea of guilty and was placed under bond in the amount of \$100, to await action by the Grand Jury. This information will be verified.

Copy of subject Merritt's statement is being forwarded to the Bureau under separate cover for comparison of the handwriting therein with the handwriting appearing on the original extortion letters to victim De Nille. The Los Angeles office is being requested to forward these original copies to the Bureau in order that such comparison may be made.

UNDEVELOPED LEADS:

The EL PASO Division, will follow and report further prosecutive action; will report the results of hearing before U. S. Commissioner San Dazco.

P E N D I N G

Subject fully realizes the mistake he has made and intends to enter a plea of guilty when arraigned on the matter before the U. S. Commissioner, and also later before Federal Judge. He stated he intends to ask the mercy of the court as he has a wife and four children to support who have no means of livelihood while he is being detained.

Merritt was exhibited the photographic copy of the letters received by victim De Mille, which had been furnished by the Los Angeles office, and immediately stated that these were copies of the letters which had been written and mailed by him to Mr. De Mille. In regard to the name James Frome, which was used by subject Merritt, he advised that this name had just occurred to him, that he did not know anyone by this name, and that he had never used it before.

The following personal information was obtained by Agent from subject Merritt during this interview:

His father is James E. Merritt, residing in Oklahoma City, Okla., at an unknown address. His mother is deceased. He has two brothers, T. E. Merritt of 6207 Eberhart Avenue, Chicago, Ill., and T. E. Merritt, who lives at an unknown address in the state of Arizona. His wife's name is Verda Merritt, residing with their four children at 403 S. 9th St., Albuquerque, New Mexico. His children are Roma Lee, age 15, Don E., age 14, Edwin Bruce, age 7 and Carolyn, age 5. He attained the sixth grade in grade schools. He is presently working as a candy salesman on a commission basis, selling Tom Houston Peanut Products for John B. Corring of Albuquerque, New Mexico. He has been working in this capacity for the past 1 1/2 years. He has lived in Albuquerque about three years, and operated a small cafe business the first year he was in Albuquerque. He has also worked for E.E. Hudson at Cushing, Oklahoma, as a laundry wagon driver for a period of four years. During the world war he enlisted in the U. S. Navy at St. Louis, Mo., and was discharged at the Great Lake Station on December 31, 1918. He stated he had never been arrested before with the exception of once or twice for drunkenness, and stated he had never been in any trouble before.

The following description was obtained from personal interview and observation:

Name	ROMAN MERRITT alias JAMES MERRITT
Age	39 (Born 2-15-98 at Laredo, Texas.)
Height	5' 10 1/2"
Weight	170
Hair	Light Brown
Eyes	Blue
Complexion	Fair
Build	Medium heavy
Scars	Out scar vertical, left center of forehead scar left center of forehead
Criminal record	Being requested of Bureau
Fingerprints	Taken by U. S. Marshal, Albuquerque

"for the Associated Press and told him exactly what I had done and further that I intended to give myself up and stand trial for the offense I knew I had committed.

"I called at the Gen. Del. Window for a letter addressed to James Frome, and was handed a large size light brown envelope. I noticed that the envelope had some thing about De Mille in the left hand upper corner of the envelope. at the time I called for and received this letter I was accompanied by the Associated press reporter whose name I believe to be Harris or Harrison, this reporter was also with me when I opened this letter. the letter actually contained only blank pieces of paper. I then walked back into the Post office with the reporter and told the post office officials I desired to give myself up. Mr. Tom Delgado, Chief of police was called and I was placed under arrest.

"I am a married man and have a wife and four children who live at 403 So. 9th, Albuquerque, N.M., my wife's name is Yerda.

"I still realize that I have done wrong in writing these letters to Mr. De Mille, and intend to enter a plea of guilty when arranged on this matter in court.

"I intended to make amends for the wrong done by giving myself up, and confessing my guilt.

ROMAN MERRITT.

Witnessed:

E. C. DORRIS

Special Agent, F.B.I.

Dept. of Justice, El Paso, Tex."

Merritt stated he had written these letters when he was very drunk and did not realize what he was doing; that he had written one letter while sitting in his truck and had taken same immediately to the Post Office to mail, and while there had written the second letter, mailing both letters at the same time. He believes one of them was air mailed. He then returned to Santa Fe on September 28, 1937, and had again begun drinking and brooding over the fact that he had been foolish enough to write these letters, as he realized he would certainly be caught. He stated he realized that his fingerprints were on file in the War Department, and that his fingerprints would undoubtedly be found on the extension letters to Mr. De Mille, and that it would be a very simple matter to catch him.

Merritt assured Agent that he had sent a letter to Mr. De Mille, as threatened in the letter, and that he fully expected to be arrested at the time he called for the letter at the post office in Santa Fe addressed to James Frome, and had been greatly shocked when handed this letter and when the reporter appeared to arrest him. He stated he had then walked outside the post office, opened the letter and noted that it contained blank pieces of paper, and then had requested the Associated Press reporter to accompany him to contact the post office officials, advising him he wished to surrender himself.

letter to James Frome. At this time Agent was instructed by Special Agent in Charge [redacted] to return to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to attend to other expeditious matters. As it appeared that no one was going to call for the dummy letter. At the time agent departed from the post office at Santa Fe, instructions were given the postoffice employees, who in turn directed their clerks at the General Delivery Window, that in the event anyone called for the letter addressed to James Frome, this party should be closely observed and full and complete description obtained, also that he be followed out into the street and observed in the event he got into any automobile or other conveyance, and full descriptive data obtained of any such vehicle.

On the afternoon of Sept. 28, 1937, Postmaster A. F. Martinez of Santa Fe, N. M., called Agent at Albuquerque, N. M., and reported that a person named Roman Merritt had called for the letter addressed to James Frome and had surrendered to the postoffice officials. At the time Merritt called for the above letter, he was accompanied by a reporter from the Associated Press, and had already given the story to this reporter.

The writer immediately returned to Santa Fe, New Mexico where subject Merritt was interviewed in the Santa Fe County Jail, where he had been placed by Chief of Police Tom Delgado, who had been summoned by the Post Office officials after Merritt had surrendered. Merritt furnished the following written statement to Agent, in his own handwriting:

"Santa Fe, N.M.
Sept. 28th, 1937

"I Roman Merritt, make the following statement voluntarily to E. C. Morris, who I know to be a special agent United States Dept. of Justice. I have been warned and fully understand that I do not have to make any statement and no further, that this statement may be used against me in any court of law.

"On Sept. 14th, 1937 while in Santa Fe N.M. I suddenly decided I would write a letter to Mr. Cecil B. DeMille at Los Angeles, Calif. at the time I reached this conclusion I was in an intoxicated condition and was sitting in my truck parked on the street near the Plaza in Santa Fe. I also wrote an other letter at this time to Mr. De Mille and this letter was written in the Post office lobby. Both letters were also mailed at this time at the Post Office in Santa Fe. I am now of the opinion one of them was air mailed.

"I do not know what caused me to write these letters, but realized after I had sobered up that I had done wrong. I returned to Santa Fe on Sept. 28th, 1937 and called for the letter, I expected under the name of James Frome as I had signed the letters to Mr. De Mille with the name James Frome. Just before calling for the expected letter at the Gen. Del. window at Santa Fe, I called a reporter

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

CASE ORIGINATED AT **LOS ANGELES, CALIF.** FILE NO **9-33**

REPORT MADE AT **El Paso, Texas** DATE WHEN MADE **10-5-37** PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE **9-27, 28, 29-37** REPORT MADE BY **L. C. Dorris** IN W

CHARGED: **ROMAN MERRITT alias JAMES FROME;
SECIL S. DE MILLE, Victim.** CHARACTER OF CASE **EXTORTION.**

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS Subject Merritt called for and received dummy letter from victim and voluntarily surrendered to Post Office authorities at Santa Fe, New Mexico. He had previously furnished confession and story to reporter of the Associated Press. Subject furnished Agent written statement admitting writing extortion letters to victim De Mille and receiving dummy letter. Complaint authorized and filed. At Commissioner's hearing Merritt pled guilty and placed under \$2500 bond.

REFERENCE: Teletype from Los Angeles office, 9-25-37; Letter from Los Angeles to Bureau, 9-25-37.

DETAILS: AT SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO.

Reporting agent was contacted by telephone from the El Paso Bureau office on Sept. 25, 1937, and instructed to proceed immediately to Albuquerque, New Mexico, there to contact Special Agent in Charge E. H. Colvin who would furnish necessary information in regard to the two extortion letters received by the victim in this case, postmarked Santa Fe, New Mexico.

After receiving this information, Agent proceeded immediately to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and there contacted Post Office officials A. F. Martinez, Postmaster, and Robert Stevenson, Assistant Postmaster, who promised full co-operation in this matter. From the time that the General Delivery Window opened on the morning of August 27, 1937, at 8:00 A. M., until 6:00 P. M., on that date, and until 1:00 P. M., on the following date, Agent kept a constant surveillance but no one appeared during this period of time at this window requesting a letter

APPROVED AND
FORWARDED

SPECIAL AGENT
IN CHARGE

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

R. H. Colvin

9 3091 6

JUL 11 1937

COPIES OF THIS REPORT

- 3 - Bureau
- 2 - Los Angeles
- 1 - USA, Santa Fe
- 2 - El Paso

RCV:HD
9-3091-6

October 13, 1937

9-3091

Special Agent in Charge,
El Paso, Texas.

Re: HOMER MCGRITT alias JAMES PHONE;
Cecil H. DE MILLE, Victim;
Extortion

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to the report of Special Agent E. C. Dorris dated at El Paso, Texas, October 5, 1937, concerning the above captioned case.

In view of the fact the title of this report is marked "changed", the first paragraph of the report should have contained an explanation as to the reason for changing the title.

From recent newspaper dispatches it is observed that Special Agent E. C. Dorris is alleged to have made statements to the press relative to this case, and from an Associated Press dispatch appearing in the Washington Star of September 29, 1937, Special Agent Dorris is alleged to have stated that subject, in a signed statement, confessed he had written to the victim while "staggered drunk".

Please advise relative to the publicity in this case.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAILED

OCT 14 1937

RECEIVED
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

**Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice**

ATP:JEM

Washington, D. C.

October 7, 1937.

9-3091-1

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. NATHAN

Re: James Frome;
Cecil B. De Mille - Victim.
EXTORTION.

Under date of September 27, 1937, there was received for examination in the Laboratory and Single Fingerprint Sections two original extortion letters addressed to the victim in the above-entitled case, and signed James Frome. One fragmentary latent fingerprint was developed on the first page of the letter beginning "Please excuse me ...". Upon examination in the Single Fingerprint Section by Mr. A. T. Potter, this latent print was found to be not identical with the three sets of prints submitted by the Los Angeles Field Division for elimination purposes, and also with an additional set of prints for one individual named by that office, which prints were on file in the bureau.

In an effort to identify the latent impression a name search was conducted by Mr. R. J. Upton of the Single Fingerprint Section, in the absence of Mr. Potter, in the Card Index Section on the basis of the name "James Frome". No record was found for this name, but a John Frome was found bearing an arrest number at Dallas, Texas. (John Stewart, FBI#-42786). The fingerprints of this person were not identical with the latent fingerprint.

The jacket for John Stewart, alias John Frome, was referred to Mr. Appel, laboratory examiner of the case, who, after a tentative examination, expressed the opinion that John Stewart, alias John Frome, FBI#-42786, was probably identical with the writer of the extortion letters. The Laboratory is conducting a further examination.

A transcript of the criminal record of John Stewart, alias John Frome, is being forwarded to the Los Angeles Field Division, with a carbon copy to the El Paso Field Division.

ALL INFORMATION
RESPECTFULLY,

L. C. Schilder.

CC-Laboratory.

9-3091-7

SEP 28 1957

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Carson
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Jones
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy

EL PASO TEXAS 28 740 P

FBI JUSTICE

JAMES FROM CECIL B. DE MILLE VICTIM EXTORTION STOP SUBJECT IN CUSTODY

SANTA FE NEW MEXICO WILL BE INTERVIEWED TONIGHT BY BUREAU AGENT

COLVIN

1011P

9-3091-8

OCT 12 1937 A.M.

U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

INDEX

ONE

FILE

VETERAN HELD FOR EXTORTION

\$300 Is Demanded From
Movie Producer.

SAN ANTONIO, N. M., Sept. 29.—(AP)—Roman Merritt, chunky World War veteran and Albuquerque peanut raisinman, leaped wearily against the bars of his cell here Wednesday night and said he would plead guilty to attempted extortion of \$300 from Cecil B. DeMille, Hollywood producer.

"I want to let this thing take its course now—get it over with," he said soberly, appearing emotionally exhausted after recurrent fits of sobbing following his arrest.

Plagued by conscience and fear of consequences, he squall out an Associated Press capital reporter Tuesday night to confess his action and to have himself turned over to department of justice representatives, who had been watching the Santa Fe post office for the claimant of a decoy letter from DeMille.

Merritt's wife, mother of his four children, came from Albuquerque late Wednesday to visit him in his cell.

9.30 91-4

Says He Was Drunk

"I was stubborn drunk when I did it and now I want to give myself up," the chunky blond war veteran sobbed in the newspaper.

"We'll take a walk. I'll call for the letter and they'll arrest me and it'll all be over with. I can't stand it any longer."

Between drinks at a bar, Merritt, father of four children, confessed how he had written an extortion letter in the circus extortive.

"I was desperate for \$300," he said. "I just had to have it. I had heard DeMille's name over the radio and two weeks ago, when I was so drunk I couldn't think straight, I wrote the letter demanding that he send me \$300 or else. I don't remember what else I said, but I told him to send it by James Frome, general delivery, Santa Fe. They're bound to get me. I was in the army and my finger prints are on record. I want to give myself up and get it over with. We'll go to the post office now."

Merritt walked to the general delivery window and asked if there was mail for J. Frome, General Delivery. Lorenzo Gutierrez asked him to repeat the name and handed him a long envelope bearing an airmail stamp and DeMille's return address.

It contained two blank sheets of DeMille stationery.

Then when no one appeared to accuse him, Merritt asked that the newspaper find a Federal officer.

Postmaster A. F. Martinez said

Continued on Page One

Man Confesses Extortion Plot

Continued from Page One

his assistant, F. R. Stephenson, summoned Police Chief Tom Delgado while Merritt sobbed out his confession in the postmaster's office. Delgado took custody of the prisoner and notified the Department of Justice at El Paso.

The letter was sent as a ruse to trap the confessed extortionist postal authorities said. Department of Justice Agent E. C. Derris of El Paso had until noon maintained a constant vigil at the post office waiting for the letter to be claimed.

"He only took eight minutes for lunch," a post office employee said.

Clerk Gets Gun

The general delivery clerk was instructed to obtain the description of the person claiming the letter. He left his window to follow Merritt and when he saw the newsman believed he had two to deal with and returned for a revolver. In the meantime Merritt gave himself up to the postmaster.

Merritt was an employee of Tom's Fresh Co. of El Paso, he said, and he gave his address as 405 South Ninth Street.

ELKS INITIATE

El Paso Journal
Sept. 29, 1934

Weather Forecast

New Mexico: Partly cloudy;
to cloudy Wednesday and
Thursday; warmer east portion
Wednesday.
Arizona: Mostly cloudy Wed-
nesday and Thursday.

ALBUQUERQUE

NEW MEXICO'S
LEADING
NEWSPAPER

J

57th Year

Volume 214
Number 91

Published Every Morning

Wednesday Morning, September 29, 1937

MAN WANTED IN EXTORTION

PLOT SURRENDERS

Wife Cannot Understand Why Husband Wrote Letter

Mrs. Merritt Says He Must Have Been Drunk When He Mailed Money Demand to Movie Producer

"I can imagine no reason for my husband's action. He must have been drunk. That is the only explanation."

Thus Mrs. Roman Merritt commented late Tuesday night on the arrest of her husband in Santa Fe when he confessed to sending an extortion letter demanding \$300 from Cecil B. DeMille, motion picture producer.

Mrs. Merritt, at her home, 484 South Ninth, had retired confident in the supposition that her husband, a salesman, merely was in Santa Fe on business and was expected to return Wednesday.

"Mr. Merritt drinks once in a while, but there is nothing vicious about him," she said. "He must have been crazy drunk if he wrote such a letter."

"There is nothing in our home life that calls for an urgent need of money. My husband has steady work. He always has had steady work. He is known among all his friends and business associates as being a very honest man. I do not understand this trouble at all. I just can't understand how he could do such a thing," she said.

Mrs. Merritt said that her husband was a World War veteran but that he had not seen active service.

The Merritts have four children—the eldest a girl of 18 and the youngest a boy of five.

R. H. Colvin, Department of Justice agent in charge, said that the extortion letter sent to DeMille demanded \$300 and threatened "bodily harm to DeMille or a member of his family." The federal agents and officers had been watching the Santa Fe postoffice windows for two days and a half but had concluded the whole thing was a flasco, and were about to pay no further attention to it.

"We checked on the name of Frome and could find no Frome in Albuquerque or Santa Fe. I told Dorris to watch the postoffice for a couple of days, anyway, and when no one showed up, we figured it meant nothing and were ready to drop the case."

Merritt was to be brought to Albuquerque late Tuesday night, or Wednesday morning.

VETERAN HERE ADMITS THREAT TO DE MILLE

Roman Merritt Says He Wrote Letter Asking \$300 When Drinking

JAILED IN SANTA FE

Reporter Accompanies Him To Postoffice Where He Gets Dummy Letter

SANTA FE, Sept. 26 (U. P.)—A man who said he was Roman Merritt, 39-year old Albuquerque war veteran, surrendered to an Associated Press reporter here Tuesday with the admission he had attempted to extort \$300 from Cecil B. DeMille, Hollywood motion picture producer. He was immediately turned over to police.

Late Tuesday night the prisoner said he had made a detailed statement for E. C. Dorris, Department of Justice operative, admitting writing two letters to DeMille demanding \$300 under the threat of bodily harm.

Merritt said he was told he would be arraigned in United States Commissioner's Court here Wednesday.

Department of Justice men had maintained a vigil at the postoffice window until a short time before Merritt appeared there to inquire for a letter.

\$300 EXTORTION NOTE SENT TO C. B. DE MILLE

Department of Justice Agent Re-
ports Confession From Sus-
pect in Case.

By the Associated Press.

SANTA FE, N. Mex., September 23.
—E. C. Dorris, Department of Jus-
tice agent, said today a man, giv-
ing the name of Roman Merritt
of Albuquerque, had admitted
sending an extortion letter to Cecil
B. De Mille, Hollywood producer.

The letter demanded \$300.

The man, whose arraignment was
set for late today, was captured yester-
day shortly after calling for a
decoy answer from De Mille at the
post office here. Dorris said the
man had confessed in a detailed
statement he had stolen the pro-
ducer while "subconsciously drunk."

De Mille, in Hollywood, said his
secretary had turned the letter over
to authorities.

"I'm sorry he had the impulse to
write me," De Mille added.

Handwritten note:
I am not familiar with

Handwritten numbers:
34 11 17

De Mille Extortion Plotter Confesses

SANTA FE, Sept. 28.—(AP)—A man who said he was Roman Merritt, 39-year-old Albuquerque war veteran, surrendered to a newspaper reporter here today with the assertion he had attempted to extort \$300 from Cecil B. DeMille, Hollywood motion picture producer. He was immediately turned over to police.

Merritt was confined in the Santa Fe county jail pending arrival of Department of Justice agents, who until noon today had maintained a vigil at the general delivery window of the postoffice here.

I WANT TO GIVE UP

"I was stubborn drunk when I did it and now I want to give myself up," the chunky blond war veteran said to the newsmen.

Accompanied by the reporter, Merritt went to the postoffice and picked up a decoy letter sent to him from DeMille's home. But no one appeared to accuse him.

DE MILLE SORRY FOR EXTORTER

"I'm sorry for the man; I'm sorry he had the impulse to write me, but the studio turns over that sort of letter to the authorities as a matter of course."

With this laconic comment, Cecil B. DeMille last night disclosed that Merritt's alleged extortion letter was but one of a number the producer receives each year.

DeMille said one of his secretaries had received the letter several days ago and turned it over to Paramount Studio officials to take its regular course.

1937

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CAA:EB

Laboratory Report

Case: Roman Merritt, alias James ⁰Trane,
Cecil B. De Mille - Victim; Extortion.
October 16, 1937. Number: 9-3091-5

Specimens: K1. Sample handwriting of Roman Merritt consisting of
four-page statement dated September 20, 1937.

Examination requested by: El Paso

Date received:

10/8/37

Examination requested:

Document

Result of examination:

Examination by: Appel

The conclusion was reached that Roman Merritt, specimen K1, wrote
the two extortion letters in this case.

If testimony is to be desired, the Bureau should be advised in
time for the preparation of charts.

- 1 - Bureau
- 2 - El Paso
- 1 - Los Angeles
- 1 - Laboratory

RECORDED

9-3091-9

11 1937

31-170

October 16, 1937.

Re: [unclear]

9-3091 -9

Special Agent in Charge,
El Paso, Texas.

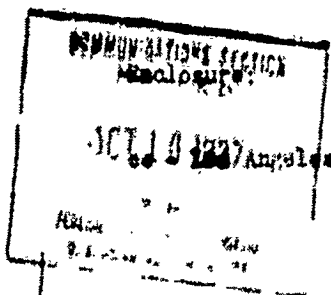
Re: Roman Herritt, alias James Frome;
Cecil B. De Mille - Victim; Rationing.

Dear Sir:

There is transmitted herewith the laboratory report
covering the examination of specimens submitted by your office
in connection with the above entitled matter and received in
the Bureau October 8, 1937.

Very truly yours,

✓ J. E. Hoover
John Edgar Hoover,
Director.



Laboratory Report

October 18, 1937

Number: 9-3091

Case: James Brown;
Cecil McKillop - Victim;
Extortion.

Specimens:

Requested that the signatures of John Stewart appearing in
Jacket #42786 be compared with the questioned material in
instant case.

Examination requested by: Los Angeles

Date received: 10-7-37

Examination requested: Document

Result of examination:

Examination by: Appel

In connection with the search of the fingerprint record referred to in a Bureau letter to the Los Angeles field division of October 7, 1937 and referring to FBI-42786, comparison was made of the signatures on the fingerprint cards with the writing on the extortion letters. No conclusion was reached because there was only one signature on the fingerprint cards which may be used for this purpose. It is believed that if additional specimens of writing known to be that of FBI-42786 are obtained a definite decision may be made. Of course, these should probably include words used in the extortion letter or additional specimens of the name.

1-Bureau
2-Los Angeles
1-Si Paso
1-Laboratory

RECEIVED

9-3091-10

1937

October 18, 1937

RECORDED

9-3091 - 10

Special Agent in Charge,
Los Angeles, California.

Re: James Frome;
Cecil B. DeMille - Victim;
Extortion.

Dear Sir:

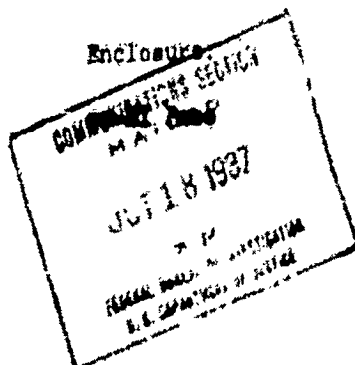
There is transmitted herewith the laboratory report covering the examination of specimens submitted by your office in connection with the above entitled matter and received in the Bureau October 7, 1937.

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

Enclosure



Handwritten signatures and initials, including "J. E. Hoover" and "K. G. P."

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
202 United States Court House,
El Paso, Texas.

October 18, 1937

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Re: ROMAN MERRITT alias JAMES FROME;
CECIL B. DEWILLE, Victim.
EXTORTION.
El Paso File 9-33.

Receipt is acknowledged of Bureau letter 9-3091 dated October 13, 1937.

The Bureau's comment relative to the fact that explanation as to change of title should have been inserted in report of Agent E.C. Dorris dated October 5, 1937 is noted, and efforts will be made to avoid similar errors.

With respect to newspaper dispatches stating that Special Agent Dorris is alleged to have made statements to the press to the effect that subject in a signed statement confessed he had written to the victim while "stubborn drunk." Please be advised that Agent Dorris made no such statement to the press, and informs us that he declined to make any statement to the reporters at all. It is observed from the press dispatches on file in this office that the article actually states: "I was stubborn drunk when I did it and now I want to give myself up," the chunky-blond war veteran sobbed to the newsmen." The article continues: "The letter was sent as a ruse to trap the confessed extortionist, postal authorities said. Department of Justice Agent E.C. Dorris of El Paso had until noon maintained a constant vigil at the post office waiting for the letter to be claimed." The last quotation is the statement of the Postmaster at Santa Fe, N.M.

In connection with this case, it is desired that the original extortion note received by the Los Angeles Office and the original signed statement secured by Agent Dorris be returned to this office for use at the indictment and trial of subject.

RECORDED

Very truly yours, 9-3091-11

R.H. Colvin,
Special Agent in Charge.

RHC:jn

cc - Los Angeles

10/26/37
1000

CAA:EG

October 26, 1937.

RECORDED

9-3091 -11

Mr. H. H. Colvin,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
208 U. S. Court House Building,
El Paso, Texas.

Re: Herman Merritt, alias James Frank;
Cecil B. De Mille - victim; Extortion.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your letter of October 14, 1937
in connection with the above-entitled case.

In accordance with your request, there is returned
herewith the original evidence designated as specimens A1 through
A4 and K1, photographic copies having been made for the completion
of the Bureau's files.

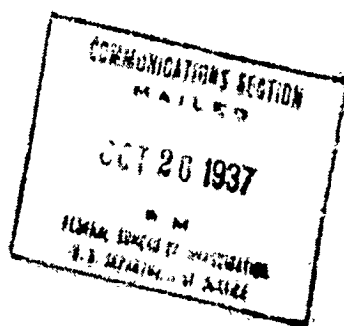
Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

Enclosures

REGISTERED MAIL

cc - Los Angeles



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Los Angeles, California
November 2nd, 1937.

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
U. S. Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

ag
Dear Sir:

Re: JAMES PROKE
CECIL B. DE MILLE - Victim
Extortion
L. A. File 9-217

Reference is made to my letter dated September 25, 1937, with which there was transmitted to the Bureau the original extortion letters in this case, as well as the fingerprint impressions of such persons as were known to have handled the letters.

In view of the fact that your letter of October 7, 1937, indicated that a latent fingerprint had been found on one of instant letters, which had not to date been successfully eliminated, there are being forwarded to the Bureau herewith the fingerprint impressions of Mr. Cecil B. de Mille, Victim; Miss Gladys Bosson, his personal secretary, and Mr. Frank E. Calvin, an employee of the Cecil B. de Mille Productions, all of whom are known to have handled instant letters.

It is, therefore, requested that these prints be compared with latent print found in this case, and thereafter placed in the personal identification files maintained by the Bureau.

It is noted that although in my reference letter I indicated one Arthur Umiker, personal valet to Cecil B. de Mille, had handled instant letters, subsequent investigation reflected that he at no time handled these letters, thus making it unnecessary to obtain his prints for forwarding to the Bureau.

RECORDED & INDEXED

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover
Special Agent in Charge

9-3091-112
NOV 6 1937

THREE
incls
cc: El Paso

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

211

(Recorded 11-1-37 1:21 p.m.)

Single Fingerprint Report

Case: Re: JAMES FRANK
CECIL B. LEWIS - Victim.
EXTORTION.

Number: 9-3541-21

Specimens:

Submitted the fingerprint cards of the following
for elimination purposes:
Mr. Cecil B. de Kille Miss Gladys Kosson
Mr. Frank E. Calvin

Examination requested by: Los Angeles

Date received: chp Nov. 6, 1937.

Examination requested: Fingerprint.

Result of examination:

Examination by: Potter

cc - El Paso

File 11/9

*To File 11/9 - missing file sent up to
Comparison with latent - no ident*

7: F

November 13, 1937.

9-3091 -L

Mr. J. H. Hansen,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
903 Pacific Commerce Building,
Los Angeles, California.

Re: JAMES PEARCE, CHCIL B.
de Mille, Victim;
EXTORTION.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your letter of November 2, 1937,
transmitting the fingerprints of Chail B. de Mille, Frank E.
Calvin and Miss Gladys Hanson for elimination purposes in connec-
tion with the above-entitled case, your file 9-217.

You are advised that the above-mentioned fingerprints
have been compared with the latent impression previously developed
in connection with this case, but no identification was effected.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

AMH:WALL.

CC - El Paso.

